

By The Rev. Daniel Simmons

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I want to address the claims made in Mike Sabot's letter to the editor in the June 10 edition of The Albany Herald. Contrary to the the claims in the letter, the result of the bill that Congressman Bishop signed (HR 1416) does not weaken ethics reform. Its intended purpose is to improve the Office of Congressional Ethics' processes and ensure fairness. Nothing in it diminishes the standards of ethics for members or changes the punishment process for unethical behavior.

The assertion that someone allegedly associated with Congressman Bishop made disparaging remarks about farmers is not correct. Mr. Bishop confirmed to me that no one connected with him made those statements.

Congressman Bishop has an excellent record of representing farmers and has developed a solid relationship with them. The truth is, earlier this year the Georgia Peanut Commission, at their annual Georgia Peanut Farm Show, gave him their "Work Horse" Award for his exceptional work on their behalf.

My hope is that people will be wise enough to distinguish rethoric from truth.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Rev. Daniel Simmons is pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Albany.